

Message Text

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ACTION AF-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CU-02 CIAE-00 INR-05 NSAE-00

RSC-01 USIA-06 PA-01 PRS-01 IO-10 SIL-01 LAB-04 SS-15

SP-02 /068 W

----- 089268

R 171705Z DEC 74

FM AMEMBASSY BAMAKO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 444

AMEMBASSY PARIS

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STATE PASS MARSHALL BERG, CU/AF

PARIS PASS MELONE

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ML, PGOV, OEXC

SUBJ: MALI LABOR MINISTER IMPRESSED BY CU-SPONSORED U.S. TOUR

SUMMARY: MALIAN MINISTRY OF LABOR SORY COULIBALY, IN PAST VOCIFEROUS CRITIC OF U.S., RETURNED FROM 30-DAY IV GRANT VISIT TO U.S. WITH EFFUSIVE PUBLIC PRAISE FOR AMERICAN SOCIETY. AMEMBASSY INTERPRETS COULIBALY'S CHANGED ATTITUDE AND PUBLICITY LOCAL PRESS ACCORDED HIS VISIT AS ONE OF SEVERAL SIGNALS BY GOM THAT MALI IS PROMOTING CLOSER RELATIONSHIP TO U.S. END SUMMARY.

1. IN DEC. 8 ARRIVAL STATEMENT MALIAN MINISTER OF LABOR SORY COULIBALY THANKED U.S. GOV. QUOTE FOR FRIENDLY INITIATIVE WHICH ALLOWED ME MAKE TRIP TO RICH IN TEACHINGS OF ALL KINDS...I WAS STRUCK ABOVE ALL BY DYNAMISM, ENTERPRISING SPIRIT, DIVERSITY AND COMPLEMENTARY RELATIONSHIPS OF PEOPLES OF DIFFERENT STATES, PARTICULARLY IN AGRICULTURE, INDUSTRY. END QUOTE. GOM-CONTROLLED RADIO AND NEWSPAPER GAVE EXTENSIVE
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PUBLICITY TO STATEMENT.

2. MINISTER'S HIGHLY FAVORABLE DECLARATION MARK
SIGNIFICANT DEPARTURE FORMER ATTITUDES TOWARD U.S.
AS UN REP AND AMBASSADOR TO CUBA (1962-65), AMBASSADOR
TO USSR AND POLAND (1966), FOREIGN MINISTER (1967-70)
AND LABOR MINISTER (SINCE 1970), COULIBALY GAINED REPUTATION AS
ONE OF GOM'S MOST OUTSPOKEN CRITICS OF U.S. AND WEST. HE
IS ONE OF HANDFUL OF MEMBERS RABIDLY ANTI-WESTERN MODIBO
KEITA REGIME TO HAVE MADE TRANSITION TO PRESENT GOVERN-
MENT POLITICALLY INTACT. IS NOW SINGLE MOST IMPORTANT
CIVILIAN MEMBER OF GOM CABINET AND ONE OF MOST INFLUENTIAL
ADVISORS TO PRESIDENT TRAORE.

3. EMBASSY SURPRISED, THEREFORE, NOT ONLY AT SUCH FAVORABLE
COMMENTS, BUT THAT HE MADE THEM PUBLICLY AND THAT THEY
WIDELY REPORTED. SEYDOU DIALLO, SEC GEN UNION NATIONALE
TRAVAILLEURS MALIENS, ACCOMPANIED MINISTER ON TOUR AND
HAS TESTIFIED TO SINCERITY COULIBALY'S FEELINGS IN CON-
VERSATIONS ON SEPARATE OCCASIONS WITH THREE DIFFERENT
EMBASSY OFFICERS.

4. EMBASSY BELIEVES REMARKS PROBABLY ECHO MINISTER'S TRUE
FEELINGS (ALTHOUGH AT UN THREE YEARS, COULIBALY NEVER LEFT
NEW YORK-WASHINGTON CORRIDOR). HIS MAKING THEM PUBLIC
MAY BE BUT ONE MORE OF SERIES OF SIGNALS GOM SENDING
OUT SUGGESTING IT DESIRES MORE CORDIAL RELATIONS
WITH U.S. (SIGNALS TO BE SUBJECT SEPARATE TELEGRAM).

5. GRANTEE'S RETURN MARKS CULMINATION FOUR YEAR
EFFORT ARRANGE U.S. VISIT. COULIBALY FIRST ACCEPTED
NOMINATION 1970 WHEN FOREIGN MINISTER BUT TRIP CANCELLED
NUMEROUS TIMES AT LAST MINUTE. HIS ANTI-AMERICANISM,
CANCELLATIONS, AND GOM POLICY REQUIRING MINISTERS BE
ESCORTED ABROAD BY MEMBER OF CABINET (COURTESY OF INVITING
GOVERNMENT) LED EMBASSY NOT RENEW INVITATION. WHEN AFRICAN-
AMERICAN LABOR CENTER INVITED DIALLO TO NEW YORK, MINISTER
EXPRESSED DESIRE ACCEPT "STANDING INVITATION" IN ORDER
ACCOMPANY DIALLO.

6. COULIBALY, MEMBERS OF HIS CABINET, EDITOR OF OFFICIAL
DAILY ALL ATTENDED DINNER EMBASSY RESIDENCE TWO DAYS BEFORE
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DEPARTURE. DINNER HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL, CHARACTERIZED BY
INFORMALITY, FRIENDSHIP, GENUINE INTEREST IN U.S., I.E.,
WATERGATE, ECONOMY, NEW ADMINISTRATION.

7. COULIBALY NOW FORTY-FIVE YEARS OLD. PROFESSIONAL LIFE
SPANS MORE THAN TWENTY YEARS SERVICE IN COLONIAL GOVERNMENT, KEITA
POST INDEPENDENCE REGIME, AND PRESENT GOM. WILL BE IMPORTANT
FIGURE MANY YEARS AND WILL CERTAINLY PLAY MAJOR ROLE ANY

CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT TO FOLLOW PRESENT MILITARY REGIME.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PERSONAL OPINION, FOREIGN RELATIONS, MINISTERIAL VISITS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 17 DEC 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ElyME
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974BAMAKO04346
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740367-0294
From: BAMAKO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19741230/aaaaazrq.tel
Line Count: 117
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ElyME
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 06 MAY 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <06 MAY 2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <25 MAR 2003 by ElyME>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MALI LABOR MINISTER IMPRESSED BY CU-SPONSORED U.S. TOUR SUMMARY: MALIAN MINISTRY OF LABOR SORY COULIBALY, IN
TAGS: PGOV, OEXC, ML, US, (COULIBALY, SORY)
To: STATE PARIS
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005